

## **Main Street Reisterstown Program Coffee & Conversation :: Business Breakfast Minutes**

**Location/Date:** Bubbs Deli, Reisterstown - February 26, 2013

**Attendees:** Dave Alban, Vicki Almond, Bill Baker, Glenn Barnes, Tony Baysmore, Colleen Brady, Pat Brooks, Dan Carey, Scott Carothers, Annie Derzak, Lisa Doyle, John Eichler, Larry Elavsky, Tim Feaser, Kathy Gambrell, Kinsey Gill, Laurie Hay, Tina Johansson, Sean Koenig, Kevin Kowitz, Irwin Kramer, Amy Mantay, M. Martin, Mary Molinaro, Artem Nikitenuo, Zach Odani, Gerald Rehins, Calvin Reter, Jimmy Roberts, Matt Roberts, Sharon Rydell, Michelle Sholund, Charles Smith, Shirley Smith, Itzik Specterman, Herb Weiss, Karen Wilkinson

Calvin thanked the business owners for coming and told them we had been meeting since November to look for ways to improve Main Street. He introduced Amy as our temporary Main Street manager who will be assisting us with projects that will help us. Amy gave an overview of the efforts so far with the group meeting each Monday morning (10am) at Reters Crabhouse since November to pursue the effort of applying for the Main Street Maryland program. She explained that we were having today's morning meeting with the business owners to discuss what the program can do specifically for them and listen to their suggestions and concerns. We are trying to find ways to help their businesses be successful.

Amy defined the program and explained efforts so far encouraging everyone to not only participate today but to come to the Kick Off meeting March 7<sup>th</sup> and come to future Monday morning meetings. Amy let everyone know that these efforts started in 2010 with a 2 day visionary workshop. Reisterstown Improvement Association was created as a result of the workshop to get the property owners, business owners and community members organized to improve Main Street. A good way to accomplish those goals is to participate in the Main Street Maryland program and so the committee started meeting to accomplish. She said that Amy Sietz who heads the state program will be at the March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting and until they start accepting applications we should "fake it 'til you make it" – or - in other words, start acting like we are already in the program.

### **Main Street Maryland**

The Main Street Maryland program strives to strengthen the economic potential of Maryland's traditional main streets and neighborhoods. The program provides designated communities with support for economic planning, marketing and promotion, training and education. Created in 1998 by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Main Street Maryland consists of 26 designated communities that have exhibited a commitment to fostering economic revitalization and sustainability in their downtown districts. Designations are earned through a competitive process that highlights a five-point approach that incorporates design, local organization, promotion, economic development, and sustainability. Main Street Maryland's traditional downtown economic and cultural districts are the cornerstones of local communities throughout the State of Maryland.

Amy said there are currently 26 Main Streets in the program and only one is from Baltimore County. Amy displayed a map of Reisterstown and described the boundary where we will be focusing to be the area defined as the Historic area of Reisterstown which basically starts on the south side where Main Street changes from 4 lanes to 2 lanes just north of Wawa up to Butler Road on the north and including the turn on Westminster Pike to the 795 entrance.

### **Reisterstown Main Street**

The Reisterstown Main Street committee is a grassroots effort working to enhance, promote and preserve the vitality of historic Main Street for the benefit of businesses, residents, and visitors. The committee is working toward official Main Street Maryland designation. The Main Street program is a preservation-based approach to revitalization that uses a five-point approach that incorporates:

Design - Irwin Kramer

Organization - Mary Molinaro

Promotion - Calvin Reter

Economic Restructuring - Paul Davolos

Clean, Safe & Green - Dan Cary

Amy Mantay, Western Sector Coordinator & Interim Main Street manager

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Amy told everyone that the defined Historic Area of Reisterstown overlays the same section defined by the County as the Commercial Revitalization District of Reisterstown. Laurie Hay was introduced to explain the opportunities in this area. She gave everyone a handout of a Power Point presentation she prepared and discussed the programs as they apply to Reisterstown small business owners.

### **Commercial Revitalization**

The Reisterstown Main Street area is also a Baltimore County Commercial Revitalization District and benefits from County programs such as:

Architect-on-Call

Building Improvement Loan Program

Commercial Revitalization Tax Credit

Commercial Revitalization Action Grants

Laurie Hay, Commercial Revitalization Coordinator

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Amy and Laurie then opened the floor for questions and asked everyone for their thoughts creating a list of Challenges/Issues on Main Street

- Handicapped accessibility
- Making connections/networking/getting people together  
more morning meetings, get together every couple of months

- Reisterstown website  
[www.baltimorecountymd.gov/go/reisterstown](http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/go/reisterstown)  
includes Main Street meeting minutes  
interactive business directory – Amy said they plan to include a picture, website of business and information the business provides so it is a work in progress – Glenn explained that we have business directory on display in the Street Directory. Due to new business arriving, some moving to new locations and some leaving, we will be removing and replacing it frequently  
parking locations
- Efforts to bring new businesses to Main Street  
What is the market? -- develop a toolkit to assist new businesses to Main Street
- Develop a business mentoring program to help people get through the county and state process of assistance
- Access to state highway programs that can assist small business. Annie from Martha & Mary's described how she became an official vendor with the state so she could provide meals during emergency events such as snow storms when people are at Camp Fretterd.
- Better property maintenance – more curb appeal
- Regular store hours  
many businesses have only one employee causing the limited hours, suggestion was made to use high school students for part-time work/internships  
stay open at least one evening until 6 or 7 so people can stop and shop on their way home from work
- Security improved
- Historic aspect promoted
- What is the character of the town we are trying to project to others?
- Build partnerships
- School field trips will also provide exposure to parents – Mary discussed the idea of creating a field trip like she participated with her children to downtown Baltimore and Annapolis with her children touring through historic buildings. Amy said this spring she hopes to develop a brochure that may be used for a walking tour explaining the history of buildings.
- Improve walkability, slow traffic, closer crosswalks
- Look for any untapped market
- Smartphone application with a directory
- Look into advertising Main Street at the county sports complex on Mitchell Drive – Annie discussed how there are many people there everyone weekend for sports and don't realize the charm of our town to come visit. Currently you have to pay for advertising.

Amy thanked everyone for coming and suggested that we might have future morning gatherings for the business owners to discuss their vision, interest and concerns for Main Street. She encouraged anyone interested to sign up to participate on one of the 5 committees.

Amy thanked Bubb's Deli for hosting the meeting and announced that refreshments were sponsored by ROMG Chamber of Commerce, ROG Coordinating Council and Reisterstown Improvement Association.

